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TITLE You Can Start A Student Assistance Program. The Fact Is...

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ABSTRACT

This report, prepared by the Office for Substance Abuse Prevention (OSAP) provides information for starting a student assistance program as one approach for intervening and preventing alcohol and other drug problems among school-age youth. The purpose and function of student assistance programs are described, including the benefits they offer both students and schools for a wide range of problems. A section describing a program model outlines the components found in virtually every school with this type of program. Three examples are presented of school districts that have successfully adopted a student assistance program. The models differ in the services offered and the way the services are delivered, but each provides students with previously unavailable resources and help. An annotated resource list on student assistance programs citing books and booklets, periodicals, and articles is provided, and organizations that assist with planning these programs are also listed. (LLL)

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THE FACT IS.

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You Can Start a Student Assistance Program

The Student Assistance Program is a promising approach for intervening in and preventing alcohol and other drug problems among school-age youth. Modeled after the Employee Assistance Programs found in industry, the Student Assistance Program focuses on behavior and performance at school and uses a referral process that includes screening for alcohol and other drug involvement. Student Assistance Programs also work with self-referred youth to address problems of alcohol and other drug use as well as problems that could lead to alcohol and other drug use.

The Student Assistance Program is a partnership between community health agencies and the schools. Because schools are the one place where all adolescents have unrestricted access and where most adolescents feel comfortable, they provide an ideal setting for instituting alcohol and other drug programs. But the growing drug problem is not the sole responsibility of the school. The partnership places the responsibility for preventing alcohol and other drug problems, so often delegated to the school alone, with several agencies.

The Student Assistance Program answers important needs. First, it gives principals a mechanism for helping youth with a wide range of problems that may contribute to alcohol and other drug use. Conversely, the program also addresses alcohol and other drug use as problems that affect a student's entire development and offers a strategy for eliminating alcohol and other drug use both during and after school hours.

The Student Assistance Program also assists students who are suffering adverse effects from parental alcohol or other drug use. It is estimated that there are seven million children of alcoholics under the age of 18 years in this country. These children are three to four times as likely to become alcoholics as children from families without a history of alcohol addiction. Studies have documented the positive results experienced by children of alcoholics who participate in groups that focus on the unique problems of growing up in an alcoholic home. Student Assistance Programs can offer opportunities for this kind of participation.

The Student Assistance Program Model

The emerging Student Assistance Program field is wrestling with the issue of identifying, referring, and assisting students with all problems or offering only alcohol and other drug-specific services. Most Student Assistance Programs are a mix of these categories.

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Although the components and persons responsible vary widely, the following activities are found in virtually every school with a Student Assistance Program:

- Early identification of student problems,
- Referrals to designated helpers,
- In-school services (e.g., support groups, individual counseling),
- Referral to outside agencies, and
- Follow-up services.

Teachers and other nonmedical school staff are advised and trained to identify students experiencing problems that interfere with their functioning at school: they are not expected to specify the nature of the problem or intervene themselves. Students are referred to appropriate assessment and assistance resources. Student records are protected under Federal confidentiality regulations, although provisions for parental consent vary from State to State.

No matter what the mix of Student Assistance Program responsibilities and personnel, the endorsement of "top management" -- school board, principals, community leaders -- is critical to the success of the program. When that level of support is guaranteed, the way is clear for implementing an effective Student Assistance Program.

Three Examples

Most school districts that have adopted a Student Assistance Program have successfully adapted the elements of the program to match their resources and fit the needs of their schools. The models differ in the services offered and the way the services are delivered, but each provides students with previously unavailable resources and help.

Great Falls, Montana

- Uses existing staff, including school administrators, faculty, and board members, trained by outside consultants.
- Offers assistance for alcohol and other drug problems, as well as many other personal problems.

In 1981, the city of Great Falls hired an outside consulting firm to train key community people, school board members, school administrators, and faculty members in ways to address the problem of alcohol and other drug use among adolescents. Thereafter, two separate but overlapping programs were developed -- CARE (Chemical Awareness/Responsive Education), which is the school Student Assistance Program, and a Community Core Team Program.

During the first year, CARE teams composed of school administrators and faculty were established at every secondary school. They promoted awareness of the Student Assistance Program, developed a referral process, and created a position of district CARE coordinator. The second year saw the start-up of a district prevention curriculum and a district advisory committee. It also saw the start of three small student support groups, including groups for students who were having trouble with the school or with the law, who had completed a treatment program or were attending Alcoholics Anonymous and for those students who were worried about a family member's chemical abuse.

An anonymous, random survey (grades 7 - 12) revealed an alarming rate of alcohol and other drug use prior to grade six. Thus, the Student Assistance Program was extended into the elementary schools. Whereas the program for secondary school students focused primarily on intervention, the elementary school program emphasized prevention.

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Support groups of 8 to 12 students meeting with two adult facilitators are the backbone of the CARE program. Facilitators are school administrators, faculty, and community volunteers who receive a minimum of 40 hours of intensive training. The success of the groups led to expansion of this form of assistance to include:

- Concerned Persons Group - worried about family member's chemical abuse,
- Non-use Support Group - students who do not use chemicals and need peer support,
- Aftercare Group - following treatment or in conjunction with Alcoholics Anonymous,
- Topical Groups - dealing with such problems as divorce, grief, eating disorders, and
- Growth Groups - concerned with issues of growing up.

Paralleling expansion of the school program, the community program grew as well. A 10-week parenting course, a march against alcohol and other drugs, "Just Say No" clubs, and parents organizing graduation celebrations were among the activities launched by community groups.

New Holstein, Wisconsin

- Uses existing staff, including school administrators, student services personnel, and teachers, trained by the State Office of Alcohol and Other Drugs.
- Provides services for alcohol and other drug problems.

Begun in 1981, this program offers identification, referral, assistance, and support services for students with problems related to alcohol and other drugs. It also serves as an alternative to strict disciplinary action that may result in expulsions and dropouts. The New Holstein Student Assistance Program was developed and implemented by a core team of school administrators, student services personnel, teachers, students, parents, law enforcement representatives, clergy, and chemical abuse professionals, trained initially by the State Office of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse and subsequently by those previously trained. In the early stages of program development, the core team devised a referral system and designated two guidance counselors (elementary and high school) as the initial referral contacts for the district. It allowed self referrals or referral by school staff, family members, peers, or community members. After an initial session, the counselor would recommend an appropriate action.

Participants in New Holstein Student Assistance Program have found that the most effective and efficient means of helping troubled students is the student support group. Three kinds of groups are available to students with alcohol or other drug problems:

- Use/Abuse Group - students in trouble because of alcohol or other drugs,
- Concerned Persons Group - high-risk students whose home life is affected by alcohol or other drugs,
- Aftercare Group - for students who have completed alcohol and drug treatment.

Program operations are handled by a district project director, an on-site high school program administrator, and two on-site guidance counselors. The latter accept and coordinate referrals, conduct sessions, maintain documentation and evaluation records, arrange in-service training, and work closely with community and treatment resources.

Westchester County, New York

- o Uses professional Student Assistance Program counselors.
- o Provides services for alcohol and other drug problems, as well as prevention services.

The Student Assistance Program in Westchester County, New York, was developed by the State Division of Alcoholism and Alcohol Abuse and supported, in part, by a research demonstration grant from the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism.

This program provides outreach to students and parents, and provides training for school staff. There are several ways a student becomes involved in the program; students come in for help for personal problems, or can be referred by another person. The program also screens for alcohol and other drug involvement when school attendance or performance deteriorates.

The program uses professional counselors who are accountable to both the school where they are based and a community-based, non-profit prevention agency that employs them. The Student Assistance Program Director (employed by the prevention agency) and school principal have equal voices in hiring, evaluating, providing ongoing supervision, and firing these counselors. Technically, the school district is purchasing these services at 50 percent of total cost from the agency with the remainder coming from county and State funds, and private contributions.

Counseling groups of six to eight students are the primary means for helping those students experiencing alcohol or other drug problems themselves or in their families. Counselors refer approximately 20 to 25 percent of the students they see to treatment resources and community support groups.

There are six kinds of groups -- three focus on primary prevention:

- o Students new to the school,
- o Seniors, and
- o Children of alcoholics.

Three other groups focus on secondary prevention or early intervention:

- o Alcohol/drug users at school,
- o Familial alcohol/drug use, and
- o Troubled users who think something other than alcohol/drugs is the cause of their problems.

Student Assistance Counselors are available to provide training, consultation, or group facilitation to parents, clergy, police, recreation personnel, and community groups.

Resource List on Student Assistance Programs

Below is a partial listing of materials that provide hands-on guidance for developing a Student Assistance Program. Following each abstract, a notation providing availability and price information appears (prices are subject to change). Also included are the names of organizations that can provide additional information.

Books and Booklets

Preventing Alcohol Problems Through a Student Assistance Program: A Manual for Implementation Based on the Westchester County, New York, Model, by Ellen Morehouse. This manual is written in question-and-answer format to assist principals, administrators, teachers, community leaders, parents, and others who may be interested in starting a Student Assistance Program. The manual provides a general overview along with detailed information for starting a program, information regarding confidentiality regulations, and summary evaluation data. 1984, 77 pp. (Currently being updated.)

Availability
Student Assistance Services
228 Fisher Avenue
White Plains, NY 10606
(914) 997-7277
(call or write for price information)

The Student Assistance Program: The Wisconsin Experience, Department of Health and Social Services in cooperation with the Department of Public Instruction and the DePaul Training Institute. This manual describes a SAP model and operations, including functions, policies, staffing, program integration, referral procedures, services to students, training, program promotion, and evaluation. Fifty pages of appendices provide sample forms and guidelines for program operation. 1986, 127 pp.

Availability
Wisconsin Department of Health and Social Services
Office of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse
One Wilson Street, Room 434
P.O. Box 7851
Madison, WI 53707
(608) 266-2476
($3.00)

Student Assistance Program: How It Works, by Tom Griffin and Roger Svendsen. After 5 years of designing and monitoring programs, the authors detail their working model of the broadbrush Student Assistance Program. 1980, 68 pp.

Availability
Hazelden Educational Materials
Pleasant Valley Road
Box 176
Center City, MN 55012-0176
(800) 328-9000
($8.95)

When Chemicals Come to School: The Student Assistance Program Model, by Gary L. Anderson. A guidebook for school systems and communities contemplating the implementation of Student Assistance Programs, for those who already have programs, and for program consultants and trainers. In 25 chapters the guidebook defines and describes the program model, program functions, the implementation process, and the evaluation and maintenance of programs. 1987, 483 pp.

Availability
DePaul Training Institute
4143 South 13th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53221
(800) 423-6028 ext. 240
(800) 472-8770 ext. 240, in Wisconsin
($29.95 plus $2.00 shipping costs)

Solving Alcohol/Drug Problems in Your School: Why Student Assistance Programs Work, by Gary L. Anderson. This booklet traces the steps many schools have taken to deal with student alcohol and other drug use and explains why they have been less effective than expected. It explains a system for addressing all aspects of alcohol and other drug use prevention, intervention, education, referral, and support, and ways of involving parents, schools, and the whole community. 1987, 32 pp.

Availability
Johnson Institute
7151 Metro Boulevard
Minneapolis, MN 55435-3425
(800) 231-5165
(800) 247-0484 in Minnesota
($2.50)

Enabling in the School Setting, by Gary L. Anderson. This booklet shows how schools can form a system that unwittingly allows or encourages alcohol and other drug problems to continue or worsen by preventing users from experiencing the consequences of their actions. The author describes

steps that the school can take to stop enabling alcohol and other drug problems. 1987, 40 pp.

Availability
Johnson Institute
7151 Metro Boulevard
Minneapolis, MN 55435-3425
(800) 231-5165
(800) 247-0484 in Minnesota
($2.75)

One Step Ahead: Early Intervention Strategies for Adolescent Drug Problems, by J. Muldoon and J. Crowley. This book provides background, facts, ideas, and a framework for establishing and evaluating an effective Student Assistance Program. 1986, 181 pp.

Availability
Community Intervention, Inc.
529 South Seventh Street
Suite 570
Minneapolis, MN 55415
(800) 328-0417
(612) 332-6537 in Minnesota
($14.95)

Insight Class Progam. The Insight process focuses primarily on young people who are in some kind of trouble that is or could be related to their use of alcohol or other drugs. Materials include an 80-page facilitator's guide and a 40-page participant guidebook. 1987.

Availability
Community Intervention, Inc.
529 South Seventh Street
Suite 570
Minneapolis, MN 55415
(800) 328-0417 .
(612) 332-6537 in Minnesota
($24.95 for facilitator's guide;
$2.50 for participant guidebook.
Discount for multiple copies)

Adolescents, Alcohol and Drugs: A Practical Guide for Those Who Work with Young People, by Judith H. Jaynes and Cheryl A. Riggs. This guide analyzes the place of alcohol and other drugs in the lives of adolescents and examines various aspects of the helping process. 1988, 212 pp.

Availability
Charles C. Thomas, Publisher
2600 South First Street
Springfield, IL 62794-9265
($28.75)

Choices and Consequences: What To Do When a Teenager Uses Alcohol/Drugs, by Dick Schaefer. This book addresses such issues as dealing with resistance and denial, fostering productive collaboration between parents and professionals, setting limits, and using contracts to motivate young people to alter their use of alcohol and other drugs. 1987, 156 pp.

Availability
Johnson Institute
7151 Metro Boulevard
Minneapolis, MN 55435-3425
(800) 231-5165
(800) 247-0484 in Minnesota
($9.95)

Staying Straight, by Mary Montagne. This booklet examines the process of healing and renewal along with the special issues adolescents confront on their road to recovery from alcohol or other drug dependence. Most adolescents need help in relearning how to have fun, where to fit in, making new friends, and just being successful in general. The booklet is for teens, as well as parents, teachers, clergy, counselors, and anyone else who works with teenagers who are in an alcohol or other drug recovery program. 1987, 36 pp.

Availability
Community Intervention, Inc.
529 South Seventh Street
Suite 570
Minneapolis, MN 55415
(800) 328-0417
(612) 332-6537 in Minnesota
($2.75)

Cocaine: From Dependency to Recovery, by Cardwell C. Nuckols. Written primarily for counselors, this book provides information on both cocaine and the cocaine addict. The book covers the various forms of cocaine, the phenomenon of cocaine dependence, and alternatives for treatment. 1987, 118 pp.

Availability
Human Services Institute
P.O. Box 14610
Dept. CA-6789
Bradenton, FL 34280
(800) 828-9474
(813) 746-7088 in Florida

Paying the Price, by Thomas M. Griffin. This pamphlet alerts athletes as well as coaches to the risks and alleged benefits of chemical use and gives practical suggestions for more responsible and productive team interaction. The pamphlet presents factual information to examine common beliefs about drugs and athletic performance and suggests strategies for preventing alcohol and other drug-related health and behavior problems. 1985, 24 pp.

Availability
Hazelden Educational Materials
Pleasant Valley Road
Box 176
Center City, MN 55012-0176
(800) 328-9000
($1.75, ask for item 1378B)

Periodicals

Student Assistance Journal, premier issue (May/June 1988). Has articles on several model SAPs, evaluating SAPs, community-school partnerships, screening, codependence within the educational setting, and a variety of departments (e.g., legal, media, resources, book review, coming events).

Availability
Performance Resource Press
2145 Crooks Road, Suite 103
Troy, MI 48084
(313) 643-9580
(Subscription rate: $32 for 5 issues annually)

Community Intervention, Special Edition, 1987, Student Assistance Programs Work. Contains articles on early intervention, alcohol/drug versus broadbrush programming, high-risk behavioral symptoms, student assistance teams, insight classes, four interviews with school personnel concerning the value of SAPs, liability issues, and resources.

Availability
Community Intervention, Inc.
529 South Seventh Street, Suite 570
Minneapolis, MN 55415
(800) 328-0417
(612) 332-6537 in Minnesota

The final rule on confidentiality of alcohol and drug patient records. Federal Register 52(110), June 9, 1987. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recently issued a final rule that encompasses more than seven years of rulemaking on Federal regulations concerning the confidentiality of alcohol and drug abuse patient records. The Federal confidentiality regulations apply to schoolbased SAPs; however, the issue of parental consent is a State issue and must be checked with the State substance abuse authority.

Availability
Superintendent of Documents
Government Printing Office
Washington, DC 20402
(202) 783-3238
($1.50)

Articles

Cooperative Model for Preventing Alcohol and Drug Abuse, by John Chambers and Ellen Morehouse. **NASSP Bulletin** (Natl. Association of Secondary School Principals), January 1983, p. 81-87. Describes the development of the Student Assistance Program used throughout Westchester County, NY.

Availability
Library

"The Principal's Role in Preventing, and Reducing Student Substance Abuse," by Deane Flood and Ellen Morehouse, **NASSP Bulletin** (Natl. Association of Secondary School Principals), February 1986, p. 10-15.

Availability
Library

"The Student Assistance Program: An Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention Model," by Ellen Morehouse, in **Prevention Strategies for Mental Health**, Eugene Aronowitz (ed.), New York: PRODIST, 1982, p. 113-125. Provides a concise overview of the theory behind a Student Assistance Program and the program model developed in Westchester County, New York.

Availability
Library

"Working in the Schools with Children of Alcoholic Parents," by Ellen Morehouse, in **Health and Social Work** 4(4):145-162, 1979. The author suggests that the school is the logical place to provide services to help children of alcoholic parents cope with their feelings, describes characteristics common to most of these children, and discusses ways in which school social workers can intervene.

Availability
Library

"Counseling Adolescent Children of Alcoholics in Groups," by Ellen Morehouse, in **Growing in the Shadow**, Robert Ackerman (ed.), Pompano Beach, FL: Health Communications, Inc., 1986, p. 125-142. A discussion of the benefits experienced by children of alcoholics when they participate in groups, along with a description of the group process and how it works.

Availability
Library

"Working with Alcohol-Abusing Children of Alcoholics," by Ellen Morehouse. **Alcohol Health and Research World**, 8(4):14-18, Summer 1984. The special challenges of working with alcohol-abusing children of alcoholics as they relate to identification, assessment, motivation, and treatment.

Availability
Library

Organizations

Student Assistance Services (SAS) 228 Fisher Avenue White Plains, NY 10606 (914) 997-7277

SAS staff and principals and superintendents of participating high schools in White Plains are available to provide consultation and training for implementing Student Assistance Programs nationwide.

Two information packets are also available from SAS. One packet is free and contains a general description of Student Assistance Programs. The other contains eight articles (including several of the articles listed above), detailed guidelines and worksheets for implementing a program, and findings from program evaluations. This packet costs $25.00.

National Organization for Student
Assistance Program Professionals
(NOSAPP)
250 Arapahoe St., Suite 301
Boulder, CO 80302
(303) 449-8077

NOSAPP is a membership organization that offers technical assistance services, sponsors national and regional conferences, and operates a clearinghouse. They have useful information for schools in the initial stages of planning a Student Assistance Program, as well as for those schools with established programs needing more specialized information.

For further information about children from families with an alcoholic or other substance abusing parent, contact:

The National Clearinghouse for
Alcohol and Drug Information
P.O. Box 2345
Rockville, MD 20852
(301) 468-2600

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